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Contact:

Eric Lamoureux

916-376-5037

Eric Mandell

916-375-4608

**State Agencies Recognized for Purchasing with Small Businesses,
Disabled Veterans**

Today, the Department of General Services (DGS) presented awards to 41 state agencies and 17 state employees for their outstanding work with California small businesses and disabled veterans' businesses at a ceremony held in Citrus Heights. According to the National Association of Business, small businesses employ more than 51 percent of the workforce in California.

"These state agencies and employees are leading the effort to create a small business-friendly state. We applaud them for their efforts," said DGS Director Fred Klass.

Annually, state agencies work to meet a goal of doing at least 25 percent of purchasing and contracting with small businesses. Furthermore, California's Veterans and Military Code's goal is to purchase at least three percent of all goods and services from Disabled Veterans Business Enterprises (DVBE).

"It is our responsibility to support small businesses, which are the backbone of our great state. When small businesses and disabled veteran-owned business succeed, our economy thrives," said State and Consumer Services Secretary Anna Caballero.

The State Agency Recognition Awards (SARA) honor state departments and employees for their best practices, creativity and outstanding achievements to advance California's small business programs and DVBE programs.

The agencies receiving top honors at the awards ceremony were:

Governor's Award – Corcoran State Prison, Substance Abuse

This facility has become a statewide leader by incorporating a one-on-one assessment and training service to all staff involved in purchasing, which includes bi-annual training

on all procurement procedures and working with the small business community. As a result of increased commitment and improvements in staff training, Corcoran increased their DVBE percentage over the past three years by 67 percent to secure 15.29 percent DVBE participation for fiscal year 2011/2012 and increased their small business percentage over the last three years by 87 percent to obtain a 72.70 percent for fiscal year 2011/2012.

State and Consumer Services Agency Secretary's Special Achievement Award – Tracie Zamora, Franchise Tax Board (FTB)

Ms. Zamora has been her department's Small Business (SB) and DVBE Advocate for the last nine years. This year, she demonstrated her steadfast stewardship of the SB/DVBE programs by continually promoting opportunities for improved SB/DVBE participation in her department's procurements. This is evident in her role as the chair of the statewide SB/DVBE Advocate Steering Committee, and as an active member of the Commercially Useful Function (CUF) workgroup. As chair of the steering committee, she leads discussions with other advocates by sharing FTB's best practices, developing new ideas to improve the state's SB/DVBE program, and by mentoring new advocates. As a CUF workgroup member, she works closely with DGS employees and other state representatives to clarify and streamline the CUF requirements for program improvement and ease-of-use by all procurement officials.

Most Notable Improvement for Small Business (SB) Contracting – California Educational Facilities Authority – Small Department Category – 48.53 percent increase in SB contracting.

Department of Housing and Community Development – Medium Department Category – 26.12 percent increase in SB contracting.

Department of Education – Large Department Category – 80.06 percent increase in SB contracting.

Most Notable Improvement for DVBE Contracting – California Educational Facilities Authority – Small Department Category – 32.78 percent increase in DVBE contracting.

Department of Community Services and Development – Medium Department Category – 35.79 percent increase in DVBE contracting.

Department of Water Resources – Large Department Category – 5.45 percent increase in DVBE contracting.

State Agency Recognition Awards –

***Gold* – Department of Water Resources; Franchise Tax Board**

***Silver* – Department of Aging**

Bronze – Department of Insurance; Kern Valley State Prison, Procurement

Honorable Mentions - Department of Corporations; Military Department; California Medical Facility

The following state employees were honored with Advocate of the Year awards:

Gold – Lisa Tackett, Kern Valley State Prison

Silver – Laurie Cootz, Department of Corporations

Bronze – Sean O’Neal, Department of Real Estate

Honorable Mentions – Ernesto Francisco, California Medical Facility; Tanya Marcellana, Department of Aging; Department of General Services, Office of State Publishing, Procurement

**Small Business Advocate Innovation Award –
California Department of Veteran Affairs (CalVet)**

This agency increased the number of SB/DVBE firms it contracts with by personally contacting firms to request CalVet vendors to apply for or renew state certification. With a greater number of certified firms, especially those that could provide medical services to the six CalVet veterans homes, they increased the level of participation and were able to use of the SB/DVBE option more often for contracts up to \$249,999.99. Since there were more certified doctors, dentists, labs, and therapists in the database, other state agencies with similar needs statewide could use these small businesses.

Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 4

This agency has endeavored to improve SB/DVBE participation by giving firms access and information, but mostly support. This informational support comes from outreach events and mandatory pre-bid meetings. They held an outreach/look-ahead event that highlighted 50 upcoming projects with an estimated value of \$750 million. They also had seven mandatory pre-bid meetings for 11 projects with an estimated value of \$435 million. The main goal of these events is to ensure the primary contractors meet with every subcontractor in attendance. With the knowledge gained at these events, SB/DVBE may improve their chances to be successful with their participation on Caltrans projects.

**Advocate/Support Award –
Wayne Gross, Department of General Services, Communication and Outreach Branch**

This year’s winner has become a "go-to" guy for SB/DVBES seeking to navigate the state’s procurement system. He offers workshops throughout California on “How to do Business with the State” and has conducted countless webinars and workshops with commitment and dedication.

Advocate Leadership Award –

Molly Lovett, Department of General Services

Presented only for the third time this year, the Advocate Leadership Award is given annually at the SARA Awards by the California SB/DVBE Association. The Leadership Award goes to the State Department Advocate who demonstrates excellence and innovation in promoting SB/DVBE firms with access to state government contracting. Molly Lovett of DGS is this year's winner for her outstanding leadership and guidance in driving DGS Real Estate Services Division to achieving consistently outstanding results in contracting the SB/DVBE firms (38.52 percent SB and 9.16 percent DVBE in 2011-2012, and 30.26 percent SB and 10.25 percent DVBE in 2010-2012).

Advocate/Peer Award –

Colleen Rubens, Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle)

Ms. Rubens has been a great force in the SB/DVBE program for more than 10 years. She is recognized by her peers as someone who is passionate and helpful. She always volunteers as a mentor to new advocates, providing years of knowledge and experience. She provides a voice when she feels SB/DVBE businesses are not being considered or when the program is not being used to its full potential.

Wayne Gross, Department of General Services, Communication and Outreach Branch

Mr. Gross travels the state assisting SB/DVBEs where he can. He is willing to take the time to introduce the DGS website to new businesses. He helps small business people understand that in order to get a state contract, a business must first make the contact.

The Department of General Services acts as the business manager for the State of California. DGS helps state government better serve the public by providing services to state agencies including procurement and acquisition solutions, real estate management, leasing and design services, environmentally friendly transportation, and architectural oversight and funding for the construction of safe schools.

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